

Remarks

Claims 1, 16, 17, 22 and 24-29 are pending in the above-captioned application, with all claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over German Offenleg 2147938 ("Sigri"), alone or in view of Shane et al. (U.S. 3,404,061), or 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sigri in view of Shane et al. or Tzeng (U.S. 6,482,520). Reconsideration of all claims 1, 7, 10-17, 22 and 24-29 is believed appropriate and is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) asserts that Sigri anticipates the invention of claims 1, 24 and 27. As such, it is asserted in the Office Action that every limitation of the rejected claims, arranged as in those claims, is found in Sigri. Since this is not the case, withdrawal of this rejection is appropriate.

More particularly, Sigri demonstrates no understanding of how the individual graphite sheet properties or the properties of a laminate comprising individual graphite sheets can be affected by changes in compaction pressure. The patent discloses nothing concerning the property dependence of pressure. Rather, the Sigri reference discusses changing properties of a brush solely by addition of resin or pitch. Indeed, no mention is made of the thermal properties of the graphite sheet whatsoever, the patent being focused solely on the electrical characteristics required for a brush.

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Thus, the Sigri citation is of questionable relevance to the invention of the above-captioned application, and is certainly not anticipatory.

The citation of Shane et al. as a secondary reference in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is not fully understood, but, since Shane et al. is also cited in the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), it is addressed in response thereto.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 16, 17, 22, 25, 26, 28 and 29) rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Sigri in view of Shane et al. or Tzeng. However, since these references do not disclose or suggest the invention of the rejected claims, even if combined in the manner of the Office Action, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Shane et al. is the seminal patent teaching a continuous process for the production of flexible graphite sheets. While an important patent, Shane et al. does not disclose or suggest aligning the graphene layers of a laminate by the application of pressure after formation of the laminate.

Tzeng discloses a thermal interface or thermal spreader, formed of one or more sheets of flexible graphite. Nothing in Tzeng, however, discloses or even remotely suggests forming a laminate of flexible graphite sheets and then exposing the

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laminate to increased pressure to further align the graphene layers of the component sheets, nor that doing so would improve the thermal performance of the laminate.

Moreover, nothing in any of the cited references teaches the density of the thusly-produced laminate, nor the amount of pressure preferred to accomplish this, as claimed.

Accordingly, nothing in the cited patents to Shane et al. or Tzeng can be combined with the inapposite Sigri patent to suggest the invention of the claims of the above-captioned application, and the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103 should also be withdrawn.

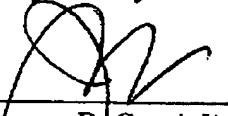
CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing remarks, it is believed that all pending claims 1, 16, 17, 22 and 24-29 are in condition for allowance. Entry of this amendment and allowance of all pending claims is, therefore, respectfully requested. If there remains any matter which prevents the allowance of any of these claims, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned, collect, at 615.242.2400 to arrange for an interview which may expedite prosecution.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency associated with the filing of this Response to Deposit Account No. 50-1202.

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Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL

I hereby certify that this **RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION** (5 pages) and **Certificate of Facsimile transmittal** (1 page) are being sent via facsimile to the United States Patent and Trademark Office at (703) 872-9306.

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Signature
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7/1/05
Date